

Sorenson offers to donate land to Wasatch County

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HEBER CITY — James Sorenson has offered to donate 106 acres, for Route A right of way, to Wasatch County. The new highway, opened three weeks ago, connects Heber City with Kanab along the south side of what will be the Jordanelle Reservoir.

However, the county commission may turn down the gift. On Monday they told Clyde Smith, representing Sorenson, that they would probably announce a decision during next

Monday's commission meeting. They said they needed time to study the offer, whatever strings may be attached, how the gift could influence certain other situations, and get some legal opinions from the county attorney, Steve Hansen.

Smith insisted there are no strings attached to the gift whatsoever. But Sorenson has been paying greenbelt taxes on the property, based on about 20 percent of its actual assessed value, Jeff Bradshaw, county clerk explained. He said when greenbelt property

changes hands, taxes for the past five years must be paid to make up the difference between what was paid and what would have been paid based on the assessed value.

The commissioners said whether the county or Sorenson pays the taxes due on the property must be determined. No one could estimate the amount, but Smith said the property had qualified for greenbelt tax benefits for no more than two years. No other "strings" were specifically discussed.

However, whether or not Soren-

son is asking for any concessions in return for the property is not the real issue. What the commissioners are concerned about is how accepting the property could affect a case involving Sorenson, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and another parcel of Jordanelle property. Utah laws allow discussions about pending litigation to be discussed in closed, executive sessions. Therefore, no information has been released to the public about the federal case and how the proposed gift could affect it.



James L. Sorenson